

Eight steps to a lead-safe child: What parents need to know to protect their child



- 1. Know that lead poisoning is preventable.** You can take simple steps to prevent your child from being exposed to a dangerous toxin.
- 2. Remember that lead is harmful.** Lead is harmful to small children and pregnant women. It can affect a child's growing body. The higher a child's blood lead level the greater the risk to the child. Lead can harm a child's nervous system, and may cause learning and behavior problems.
- 3. Talk with your doctor about testing your child.** A blood test is the simplest way to measure the amount of lead in your child's body. Your child's health care provider will discuss testing your child at ages one and two, or at any time there is a concern about exposure to lead.
- 4. Know the sources of lead.** NH homes built before 1950 often have lead in painted or stained woodwork. Opening and closing painted windows and doors can create a fine leaded dust which your child can breathe or eat. Young children, who often crawl on the floor and put their hands in their mouths, may get the lead into their bodies.
- 5. Limit the amount of dust in your home.** To reduce dust in your home, use water when you clean. Clean floors, window wells, window sills and other surfaces weekly. Use a mop, sponge or paper towel with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner.
- 6. Reduce the amount of dust that gets into your child's body.** Wash your child's hands many times a day. Wash hands and face before eating, naptime and bedtime, and after playing outdoors. Rinse pacifiers and teething toys every day. Wash toys with soap and running water once a week.
- 7. Reduce the amount of lead in your child's body.** Healthy food can protect your child from lead. Your child's stomach will take in more lead when it's empty. Serve three meals and three snacks a day and include foods high in iron, calcium, and vitamin C.
- 8. Be careful when renovating.** Lead dust also forms when lead-based paint is dry scraped, dry sanded, or heated. Renovate safely by hiring a licensed contractor or getting proper training yourself. Children and pregnant women should never be at home during any of the work and should not return until the home is cleaned.



For more information, visit the
NH Childhood Lead Poisoning
Prevention Program on-line at:
www.dhhs.nh.gov/dhhs/clppp



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